ANSWER
FOR MEN IN BUSINESS

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DRIVEN BY VISION.

VISIONARY R.G. LETOURNEAU

New Features...
- Personal
- Professional
- Family
- Career
Chances are you’ve never heard of this man. However, R. G. LeTourneau had a dramatic influence on the 20th century and world history.

June 6, 1944 saw the Allied invasion of Normandy and changed the course of world history. Accompanying the largest Allied invasion force was an impressive array of machines and equipment. Seventy percent of the heavy earthmoving equipment used by the Allies in World War II was built by a man who dropped out of school at age 14.

Robert Gilmour LeTourneau was born November 30, 1888 to Christian parents.

R. G. admitted that prior to his 16th birthday his spiritual life was hard hit. His choice of friends most likely kept his parents on their knees.

Shortly after he turned 16, one of his friends was wanted for assault and battery and another for larceny. These events shook LeTourneau: “This sudden accumulation of trouble brought me face-to-face with myself...what really got me was my mother’s worry that she was turning out one of the pioneers of juvenile delinquency.”

Impacted by a local religious crusade, R. G. made a decision that would eventually affect the entire world, “No bolts of lightning hit me. No great flash of awareness. I just prayed to the Lord to save me, and then I was aware of another presence.”

LeTourneau’s first job was at an iron works factory in Portland, OR shoveling sand and dirt. It was that menial task that set his mind to thinking of easier ways to get the job done.

His life took many twists and turns. In his own words, “I was just past 21 and...was in many ways, an iron molder, lead burner, bricklayer, carpenter, gold miner, stump puller, irrigation ditch digger, farmer, and oak chopper. . . . As far as I could see from the record, I was a washed-up bum.” By the time he turned 28, R.G. had worked at 40 different places.

No stranger to hardship, LeTourneau
became a partner in an auto-garage business, where he earned a reputation as a top-notch mechanic.

He served in the Navy in World War I, and returned to his business in 1918 to find it on the verge of bankruptcy. Desperately trying to save his business, he returned home one night to find his newborn son suffering from influenza. On February 9, 1919, his son died, and he and his wife cried out to God for direction.

They prayed diligently for the business and it began to make a turn around, but it had already taken its toll on R.G. He wanted out. Meeting with his bank, he promised to repay his $5000 debt.

When asked what collateral he had, LeTourneau held up his two hands. In what today seems inconceivable, R.G.’s honesty and determination caused the banker to extend the loan.

Unemployed, in debt, and now 30 years old, LeTourneau ran into an old friend who helped him secure a job with a farm machinery dealer. His work ethic as a trouble-shooter on breakdowns in the fields brought him success.

As happens to many who accept Jesus as Lord and experience His magnificent presence in their lives, LeTourneau began to wonder if he should become a missionary. But God had other plans and after much prayer, the Holy Spirit spoke to R.G. through his pastor who looked at him and said, “God needs businessmen as well as preachers and missionaries.” R.G.’s response was, “Lord, I’ll do anything you want me to do from this day on.”

Later, LeTourneau said his pastor’s words were “… the words that have guided my life ever since…. I have discovered that many men have the same mistaken idea I had of what it means to serve the Lord…. I didn’t realize that a layman could serve the Lord as well as a preacher.”

From that moment, LeTourneau’s life changed completely, and he would impact the world in unfathomable ways. Not long after, he began acquiring contracts for excavating jobs and went on to design and build his own machinery.

The young boy who had dreamed of a better way to dig ditches went on to build his own factory and become a pioneer in developing time-efficient techniques in construction. He spoke of God as Chairman of his Board.

What kept LeTourneau going through the Great Depression, credit crunches, challenges to his “no Sunday work” rule and the ongoing obstacles that every businessperson faces? He combined his strong work ethic and determination with his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Never one to back-down from a problem or task, R.G. would pray for guidance and wisdom, study the issue, and then work until he found a way to solve it because, “The only difference between can and can’t, is a little extra effort.”

This man who learned to dream God’s big dreams not only designed and built massive earthmoving equipment, but introduced the rubber tire into that industry after hearing complaints that metal wheels kept sinking into the ground. His pioneering skills led him to develop the welding of different metals. His impact on the oil industry is seen in the huge mobile offshore drilling platforms that support the
machines that drill for petroleum around the world. As subcontractor, his company created the challenging road that allowed heavy equipment to build the Hoover Dam.

During the span of World War II, he turned out 78 inventions, many of which helped the Allies win the war. His inventions allowed Allied forces to rapidly clear beaches in Normandy, build airstrips in North Africa, and build roads, an advantage that served to shorten the war. His heavy earthmoving equipment later filled the bomb craters in Hawaii after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

At the age of 77, LeTourneau was granted his last patent. In total, he is credited with 299 inventions including the bulldozer, various scrapers, dredgers, portable cranes, rollers, dump wagons, bridge spans, logging equipment, and the electric wheel, among many others.

All this from a man with only a seventh grade education! By God’s design, R.G. became a prolific inventor and successful businessman who would receive honorary doctorates from five different colleges and universities! A man who learned from the Creator Himself, he founded LeTourneau Technical Institute, now LeTourneau University.

Robert Gilmour LeTourneau accepted and ran with God’s destiny for his life. For years, he chose to live on ten percent of his income, giving ninety percent to Christian work, even when his business was in financial jeopardy. He said, “The question is not how much of my money I give to God, but rather how much of God’s money I keep for myself.”

A man who knew, firsthand, that God is completely relevant to everyday life, he continually emphasized that God is able to help with everyday problems.

R. G. LeTourneau’s faith guided his ethics and his business conduct. He never forgot his calling as a layman, a “businessman for God.”

To this day, LeTourneau University continues to emphasize his vision of Christians in the workplace, “every workplace, every nation.”
When I was six years old, my older brother’s name was splashed across the local newspaper for a serious crime. As far back as I can remember I felt “different” from everyone else. My first thoughts were of fear and insecurity.

Growing up in an Italian working-class household, I was the youngest of four children. Despite being a loving and caring family, we had our fair share of family dysfunction. Mom and Dad were not ones to talk calmly through stressful issues. Yelling and screaming were routine family occurrences. Many a time I saw pots, pans or Dad’s dinner plate fly across the room. So much for a peaceful family dinner!

My oldest sibling, Dan, had a powerful impact on me though much of it was negative. A charismatic man, he lived a life of crime for years.

My other brother, Vinnie, although having special needs, is a most-tenderhearted and caring individual. We are more than brothers. Even from our youth, we are the best of friends.

Then, there is my sister, Ann, always an incredibly positive influence in my life. She would one day impact my life in a way that still guides me today.

As a boy attending parochial elementary school, I had this hunger for God. In fact some classmates gave me the nickname of “Father Jim!” Yet despite this yearning to know God, there seemed to be no one to guide me to Him.

Beginning in my late teens, I found myself drawn to womanizing and the initial stages of substance abuse. During college and my first years of law school, I moved far from God. I was a heathen agnostic, drowning in ungodly living.

Having dropped out of law school twice, I worked, partied, and spiralled deeper into despair and depression. This was when “suddenly” my mother, sister and brother, Vin “gave their hearts to Jesus!” (My brother Dan and Dad would accept the Lord years later.)

Life for me wasn’t crazy enough. I now had a family of religious kooks ranting and raving about God. I wanted
nothing to do with Jesus. But, He had other and better plans for me.

It was 1974 and despite what others saw on the outside, I was an absolute basket-case on the inside. Something kept drawing me to question if God existed. I began to call out, “If You are real, You can hear me. If You are there, please reveal Yourself to me.”

Shortly after on a July afternoon, at my sister Ann’s house, when it seemed as if the world was about to cave in on me, I decided to test what she had been telling me.

Ann guided me as I asked Jesus to come into my life, forgive me of all my sin, and change my life. It was a simple but life-changing prayer.

Ann told me that I was now a son of God. I John 3:1 says, “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God.”

I didn’t change overnight though and continued to party for what seemed to be one long season! Yet, Jesus said, “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a man sowing a seed.” The seed of God was planted in my heart and my life did begin to change.

Even though I had dropped out of law school twice, within four months of accepting the Lord I reentered law school for the third time. Even the secretary from the school admission’s office was totally amazed that the admission board was willing to give me that third try!

While in school, I got married and successfully completed my last two-and-a-half years of law school. Passing the New York State bar exam, I became an attorney.

It was now 1977. We had our first child, Nicole, and four years later, welcomed our son, James II into our world.

But for a variety of reasons, our marriage dissolved and my former wife and I became ensnared in a bitter custody battle for our two children. It was during these next few years that God would teach me one of His greatest lessons - how to forgive completely.

Our divorce and custody case was marked by insane anger, bitterness, and hurt. My mind and emotions were consumed with the deepest emotional pain and scathing unforgiveness.

Much of each day was spent mulling over images of past hurts from my wife. One day when pouring out to a friend all the “transgressions” of my spouse, he said, “Jim, do you think your sins are any more pleasing to God than hers?”

That hit me like a crushing blow to the face and opened up my eyes to take an honest look at myself. “Wow! What a phony Christian hypocrite I am. I am filled with hurt and condemnation for her as if I have no sin. Yes, I had messed up countless times. And, yes, my “sins” had a part to play in our breakup.”

Matthew 6:14-15 reads: “For if you forgive and release others from their sins and
offenses, your Heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not completely forgive and release, neither will your Father forgive and release you."

Jesus went to the cross so I could be forgiven. God taught me that I must forgive her for every real or imaginary offense, every memory, and every image that conjured up anger or hurt.

My Heavenly Father throws my sin into the “sea of forgetfulness.” That’s how He forgives me. So, I began to speak out loud, sometimes fifty to a hundred times a day: “In Jesus’ name I forgive her and I release her” from whatever wrong I remembered or hurt I felt.

At first I had to force myself to say it and say it. But what happened over time, two years to be exact, was that every trace of that bitter poison was cleansed from my heart!

The Holy Spirit had changed me. He freed me, and this poison of unforgiveness would never be able to contaminate our two children.

Four years after my divorce, a single parent of a seven and eleven-year-old, I was introduced to a lovely Christian woman, Sharon. She was also a divorced single parent of five-year-old Rachel.

Within seven months of our first date, Sharon and I were married. Our family now consisted of two divorcees with three children.

Ten months later my little cousin Zachary came to stay with us for a weekend. We later ended up in court, winning custody of Zachary. That made us a blended family of six!

Eight years later my two-year-old cousin Joey came to live with us permanently. We had grown to a blended family of seven!

Isaiah 40:3-4 kind of speaks as to how the Lord has worked in our lives. We learned that God draws straight with crooked lines.

It would be great to end here as if we lived happily ever after. But as with all of us, I had more junk to clean out of my life.

Among the many flaws God was healing, was anger. It really had its hooks in me. I had carried it with me from my childhood on through my teens and into manhood.

I could go from calm to “lunatic” in a matter of seconds. Although I was doing my best to remedy this destructive behavior, it was my strong-willed Sharon who said, “Jim, your anger is destroying our family.”

Those words were absolutely frightening to me, but I recognized it was God speaking to me through my wife.

I thought, “I, the man of God, am destroying my precious wife and children?”

Yes, it was true. But God, my God, was there to forgive me, heal, and restore.

“Is anyone out there crying for help? God hears you. He’s ready to rescue you. Psalm 34:17 says: “The righteous cry and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles.

If you’re willing to give your life to Him, He will adopt you as His child and give you the grace you need to make it through.

Over time, the Lord keeps changing me into the likeness of His Son, from glory to glory.

Wholeness! It doesn’t come in an instant. It comes from walking with God, hearing and obeying His voice, one day at a time.

James Paulino is an attorney living in Webster, NY. He and his wife, Sharon, have five children and six grandchildren. They attend Faith Temple Church.
Have you ever asked yourself that question? Or, wondered how and why you wound up in your particular occupation?

Many of us can probably answer something like this, “Well, it was a family business. Or, my Dad was a doctor so I grew up around medicine.” Maybe your answer is, “I just fell into it.”

God’s Word tells us something different. He says that He’s gifted us as individuals for special tasks that He prepared beforehand. He has a specific plan for each of our lives. Knowing Him, opens the door to seeing that plan unfold.

There was a day when God had a specific job of pretty enormous magnitude for Moses. It encompassed design, construction, carpentry, manufacturing, weaving, and artistry. The job was to construct the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, furnishings, utensils—the ultimate total package! And, the One placing the order was Perfection Himself. He told Moses exactly what He wanted.

Now this is the same Moses who was about 80 years old when God called him to save His people from the clutches of the Egyptians. When God told Moses He was to go before Pharaoh, Moses said, “But God, I don’t speak well.” So even though he
didn’t trust God to equip him in that situation, God told him, “Okay, your brother Aaron will be your spokesman.”

Put yourself in his situation; you’re 80; you’ve led two-and-one-half to three million people out of slavery in Egypt, and now God places a job order that requires a large and skilled workforce and all types of materiel. Moses must have wondered, “How am I ever going to get all of this done to spec and make sure it pleases God?” The truth is that God had already given him logistical experience and the people.

So, “God spoke to Moses: "See what I've done; I’ve personally chosen Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur of the tribe of Judah. I've filled him with the Spirit of God, giving him skill, know-how, and expertise in every kind of craft to create designs and work in gold, silver, and bronze; to cut and set gemstones; to carve wood—he’s an all-around craftsman.

Not only that, but I’ve given him Oholiab, son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan, to work with him. And to all who have an aptitude for crafts I’ve given the skills to make all the things I’ve commanded you…." (Exodus 31:1-6, The Message)

God had already chosen two lead men and had equipped a workforce long before He gave Moses His job order.

God had given these men natural abilities and filled them with His Holy Spirit to the point that they were experts in every trade needed to complete the job to perfection! The Holy Spirit equipped them with wisdom, knowledge, experience, logic, understanding, sound decision-making,
and skill.

That same Holy Spirit had, years before, equipped Moses from His youth as a leader, educated by Egypt’s most learned men as he grew up in Pharaoh’s house.

When you accept Jesus as your Savior and Lord, you take the first step down the road to discovering the specific plan God has for your life. You’ve already been on a life-journey. But with God as your partner, you’ll learn your career has much more purpose than to merely earn you paycheck. Your next steps are to study God’s Word in the Bible, learn to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit for wisdom and direction, and trust Him at all times.

You’re not in your field of endeavor by accident or your parents’ plan. You’re there because God the Father knew you, fashioned you, and called you to a unique purpose before you were born (Psalm 139).

If you’ve been walking with God and find yourself faced with a seemingly unsolvable or insurmountable issue in your work, the same Holy Spirit who first called and equipped you, hasn’t left you high and dry. The God of creation has the solution to your problem.

He’s your Maker and your Redeemer and deeply cares and wants to be involved in the practical issues of your life. He knows what you need to be successful in your work and wants you to be fulfilled and successful in what He’s prepared you to do. And He’s placed you there to be His ambassador on the job.

Jim was the Chief Inspector of Quality Control at a Ford plant. He was also a follower of Christ who learned to look to the Holy Spirit and hear His voice to help him on his job.

Whenever a problem arose on the assembly line, Jim’s first move was to ask the Holy Spirit to show him exactly where and what the problem was. And, that’s exactly what the Holy Spirit did!

After a while, Jim developed a reputation as a man who could quickly get lines up and running again. As word of his abilities spread, he was called to other plants to see if he could solve their problems. The Holy Spirit never failed him! He became known as “the guy God talks to.”

God’s purpose in Jim’s life was multi-faceted.

He equipped Jim for his occupation. God’s Name and His character were made known because of how He worked in Jim’s life, and how Jim treated people and his job. Jim’s co-workers and supervisors saw up close and personal how God works in a man whose life is yielded to Him!

What we don’t know just yet is how many Ford employees came to know Christ because of this one man. That part of the story remains to be told.

God will give us supernatural wisdom and knowledge to solve the practical issues we face each day no matter what kind of work we do.

Ephesians 1:11 (The Message) says: “It’s in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, He had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose He is working out in everything and everyone.”
As I approached the convenience store I had partially remodeled to house my new business, feelings of panic overwhelmed me. No one was in sight.

Nearing the building, I saw the padlock on the door. Soon I learned that the owner—my partner in this venture—had also shut down the restaurant she had just recently opened.

When I tracked her down, I frantically asked, “Can I get my $6,000 back?”

“No, I’ve spent it all,” she said. “You’re out of luck.”

A few days later, she deeded her remaining property to her children and left town. Although I filed a police report, they never took action.

It was June of 2006. A month later, I filed for bankruptcy. Staggering under the weight of outstanding loans, credit card debt, and other obligations, I felt hopeless.

My problems began that April when I couldn’t close on a loan to buy the mobile home where I had been living.

I had wanted to arrange a land contract, but the owner insisted I get a mortgage. When I started the paperwork in October 2005, I thought it would only take a couple of months.

That meant I wouldn’t have to tell the real estate broker I was retiring from my teaching job in March 2006. Not wanting to complicate things, I decided not to reveal that information.

That proved to be a huge mistake because the closing dragged on for months. By then, banks were reluctant to loan money for property in our area about 100 miles northwest of Las Vegas.

After numerous delays, the broker left a message on my answering machine: “All we need to do is verify your income, and we can close the deal.”

For some reason, I struggled with what to do. I knew my income from a state pension and nearly 30 years in the Air Force reserves didn’t match my teaching salary.

I was a boiling cauldron of conflict. To
“I played the part of church-goer and responsible father.”

tell the truth or not?

After four years in the military, I had earned degrees in recreation and community service. Originally, I was a youth counselor with a juvenile court. Later, I worked in the state prison system for 11 years.

Seeing numerous inmates suffer because they had poor reading skills and had dropped out of school, I decided to switch gears to teaching. I thought by working with students, I could steer them in the right direction.

As these dual careers progressed, I played the part of church-goer and responsible father. However, I managed to hide serious personal problems and my financial mismanagement. This double life contributed to two failed marriages.

When the real estate broker asked me to verify my income, the dilemma forced me to a decision point. I had to decide whether to try faking it or to be honest. Telling the truth would be costly. I had already spent $10,000 on landscaping and adding two porches to the mobile home.

After hours of wrestling with my decision, I said, “No, it’s over. I’ve got to tell the truth and face the consequences.”

As soon as I said that, I felt peace wash over me. For the first time in years, that night I slept like a baby. Somehow, I knew that God was doing something inside me.

Years before I had made a pledge to follow Jesus Christ. But I let myself get sidetracked, and I reneged on my word to Him. I had only paid Him lip service. I never treated Him as my Lord.

Now, the truth hit me that all along God knew I had clung to my old sins and bad habits. But today, something stirred inside me. I knew today was the day those patterns had to be broken.

My first step in this new direction would be to call the real estate broker the next morning.

“I’m sorry, but I can’t verify my income,” I said.

After investing countless hours on this contract, he was stunned. “Well, I’m sorry too,” he said, his voice tinged with frustration and disappointment. “That means there’s no way we’ll be able to get this done.”

That reality hurt. Yet, putting an end to my pattern of deceit felt great. It was a “God moment” for me.

But there would be more crises to follow. As part of starting my business offering computer tutorials, I had enrolled in an online university to work on a doctorate in educational leadership.

The next semester would begin in June. In May, I received a letter from the federal government stating that on my student loan application, I had listed 2006 as the year I would graduate. For this reason, they wouldn’t renew the loan.

I called several agencies and explained that I had made a mistake and meant to write 2007 on my application, but that got me nowhere. Unable to pay the tuition, I dropped out. A few weeks later, my business partner closed her doors.

By August of 2006, I was drowning in so much debt my pension income couldn’t
keep up with my bills. After my landlord evicted me, I lived in my travel trailer.

Then one day I ran into an old friend who owned a towing service. He had offered me a summer job while I was teaching. When I bumped into him that August, he asked if I wanted to apply for a job. The next day he called to ask, “Do you want to come to work on Monday?”

After a few days of training, I had my own route. Not only did I have a job, it included housing in a mobile home on the towing company lot! While unpacking my belongings in my new home, I discovered a box of Answer magazines I had picked up years before.

I read the issue from cover to cover. One story touched me deeply. It was about a businessman who had lost everything.

What was the chance that story was in the magazines I held for years, yet never read until now, when I needed to hear some good news? Was it the Holy Spirit who had me hold on to them knowing what I’d face today? I’m sure He did.

I knew those magazines held something valuable that other people needed to hear. So I took them with me on the job, handing out copies to motorists I towed and telling them how Jesus changed my life.

In the midst of it all, I had started dating a woman whose husband had died. By the end of that year we were married and living in her home on five acres of land. God had given me a wife and a home.

My journey to healing has taken years, and it still isn’t finished. It has included Christian counseling and learning how to depend on God. I have learned to submit to Him, acknowledge my failures, and commit to living His way. God’s been patient with me, and I’m a different man today.

Ultimately, I wound up getting in touch with Business Men's Fellowship and started a chapter in my area.

One key to my growth has been this opportunity to form close relationships with other men. Only when I was honest about my problems and got the encouragement I needed, did I find the strength to truly live for Christ instead of just talking about it.

Despite my struggles and in spite of my imperfections, God loves me and has chosen to use me to help others know Him. That’s the wonderful truth that every follower of Jesus Christ has discovered.

Tom Smith is the President of BMF’s Amargosa Valley Chapter. A former teacher and state prison employee, Tom works as a substitute teacher and business consultant. In their combined family, he and his wife, Patty, have six children and nine grandchildren. They attend Rock Church in Pahrump, Nevada.
YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD GETS BETTER AND MORE INTIMATE WHEN TALKING THINGS OVER WITH HIM IS YOUR FIRST RESPONSE RATHER THAN YOUR LAST RESORT...

TAKEN FROM “THE MULLIGAN” BY WALLY ARMSTRONG AND KEN BLANCHARD

ANSWER testifies of God’s love for people expressed through the life of Jesus Christ. By His death and resurrection, Jesus offers redemption and eternal life to all who will believe in Him. Knowing Him, has changed us from the inside out. That’s why we eagerly tell everyone we meet all that He has done. Answer was created for that purpose: To make sure you know that you matter to God!
Have you ever wondered: Can I really know God? Or: Does He even care enough to want to know me?

The answer to both questions is “YES!” The key to that relationship is a simple act of faith on your part. That may be hard to believe in this crazy and complex world, but God loves people and kept His plan pure and simple: Jesus did it all. He came and taught us by His life. He suffered. He died. He rose from the grave conquering sin and death! He did it for you and me.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

If you want this new life in Christ, here’s all you have to do:

1. Admit to God that you are a sinner and are separated from Him. “For all have sinned; all fall short of God’s glorious standard.” (Romans 3:23)
2. Be willing to turn away from your sins and repent. “...and I tell you again that unless you repent, you will also perish.” (Luke 13:5)
3. Believe that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered and died for you on the cross to pay the penalty for your sins and that He rose from the grave. “For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” (Romans 10:9)
4. Ask God to save you. “For anyone who calls on the Name of the Lord will be saved.” (Romans 10:13)

If you are ready to accept Jesus as your Savior and Lord, pray from your heart:

“Jesus, I know I am a sinner and that I have a choice to make about my life. I believe that you died for me so I wouldn’t have to pay the penalty for my sin. I believe that You rose from the dead, making a way for me to become a child of God. I turn from my sins, and ask You to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow You as my Savior and my Lord from this moment on. Thank you for loving me, forgiving me, and accepting me into your family. I pray this in Your Holy Name. Amen.”

It’s that simple. You are now a child of God: “But to all who believed Him and accepted Him, He gave the right to become children of God.” (John 1:12)

Email us at info@bmfusa.com to let us know that you’ve chosen to follow Jesus. Visit www.bmfusa.com to see if we have a group that meets near you. You can meet Christian men who will pray with and encourage you in your journey with God.

You’ve made a momentous and life-changing decision! We looking forward to hearing from you.

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I have made a decision to follow Jesus Christ.

Email BMF with your decision at appropriate address listed on back cover and provide the following:

Name

Street City Zip Code

Email address Telephone/Cell

Or mail this form to BMF at the appropriate address listed on the back cover.
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